



DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Coast Guard

33 CFR Part 165

[Docket Number USCG-2023-0050]

RIN 1625-AA00

Safety Zone; Gallants Channel, Beaufort, NC

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DHS.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking.

SUMMARY: The Coast Guard is proposing to establish a safety zone on the navigable waters of Gallants Channel near Beaufort, NC. The safety zone is necessary to enhance the safety of mariners and participants during the swim portion of a triathlon. Entry of vessels or persons into this safety zone is prohibited unless specifically authorized by the Captain of the Port (COTP) North Carolina or a designated representative. We invite your comments on this proposed rulemaking.

DATES: Comments and related material must be received by the Coast Guard on or before [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments identified by docket number USCG-2023-0050 using the Federal Decision-Making Portal at <https://www.regulations.gov>. See the “Public Participation and Request for Comments” portion of the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section for further instructions on submitting comments.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: If you have questions about this proposed rulemaking, call or email Petty Officer Ken Farah, Waterways Management Division, U.S. Coast Guard; telephone 910-772-2221, email ncmarineevents@uscg.mil.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Table of Abbreviations

CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
FR	Federal Register
NPRM	Notice of proposed rulemaking
§	Section
U.S.C.	United States Code

II. Background, Purpose, and Legal Basis

On February 1, 2023, the FS Series organization notified the Coast Guard that it will be hosting the Crystal Coast Triathlon in Beaufort, NC. The swim portion of this event will take place from 8 to 10 a.m. on the waters of Gallants Channel each year on the second Saturday in May. The swim portion of the Crystal Coast Triathlon will consist of approximately 400 participants. The racecourse will be on the waters of Gallants Channel and will run from the Route 70 Bridge in Beaufort, NC, then North-West to Russel Slough Channel Day-Beacon 10 (LLNR34860). The Captain of the Port, Sector North Carolina (COTP) has determined that the presence of vessels and anyone else in or transiting the designated area of Gallants Channel in Beaufort, NC during the swim portion of the triathlon would pose a safety concern to the large number of swimmers on the waterway then, and to the vessels and others within the designated area.

The purpose of this rulemaking is to ensure the safety of vessels, participants, and other persons from the hazards associated with the event. The Coast Guard is proposing this rulemaking under authority in 46 U.S.C. 70034.

III. Discussion of Proposed Rule

The COTP is proposing to establish a safety zone from 8 through 10 a.m. every second Saturday in May, although the enforcement period would be subject to change. The safety zone will include all navigable waters of Gallants Channel from the Route 70 Bridge in Beaufort, NC, at N 34° 43' 38", W 076° 40' 04" then North-West to Russel Slough Channel Day-Beacon 10 (LLNR34860) at N 34° 43' 58", W 076° 40' 27.5." This area is typically used by recreational boaters. No vessel or person will be permitted to

enter the safety zone without obtaining permission from the COTP or a designated representative. To request permission to transit the area, mariners can contact Coast Guard Sector North Carolina Command Center at telephone number (910) 343-3882 or on-scene representatives on VHF-FM marine band radio channel 16 (156.8 MHz). The regulatory text we are proposing appears at the end of this document.

IV. Regulatory Analyses

We developed this proposed rule after considering numerous statutes and Executive orders related to rulemaking. Below we summarize our analyses based on a number of these statutes and Executive orders, and we discuss First Amendment rights of protestors.

A. Regulatory Planning and Review

Executive Orders 12866 and 13563 direct agencies to assess the costs and benefits of available regulatory alternatives and, if regulation is necessary, to select regulatory approaches that maximize net benefits. This NPRM has not been designated a “significant regulatory action,” under Executive Order 12866. Accordingly, the NPRM has not been reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

This regulatory action determination is based on the size, location, and duration of the safety zone. Vessel traffic will not be able to safely transit around this safety zone, which will impact a designated area of Gallants Channel in Beaufort, NC. The two-hour enforcement period should not be overly burdensome to any vessel or entity because it is not an area normally used for commercial vessel traffic. The Coast Guard will issue a Broadcast Notice to Mariners about the safety zone and about this rule, to notify vessels in the region of the establishment of this regulation. The rule will allow vessels to request permission from the COTP or a designated representative to enter the zone if necessary.

B. Impact on Small Entities

The Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980, 5 U.S.C. 601–612, as amended, requires Federal agencies to consider the potential impact of regulations on small entities during rulemaking. The term “small entities” comprises small businesses, not-for-profit organizations that are independently owned and operated and are not dominant in their fields, and governmental jurisdictions with populations of less than 50,000. The Coast Guard certifies under 5 U.S.C. 605(b) that this proposed rule would not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

While some owners or operators of vessels intending to transit the safety zone may be small entities, for the reasons stated in section IV.A above, this proposed rule would not have a significant economic impact on any vessel owner or operator.

If you think that your business, organization, or governmental jurisdiction qualifies as a small entity and that this proposed rule would have a significant economic impact on it, please submit a comment (see **ADDRESSES**) explaining why you think it qualifies and how and to what degree this rule would economically affect it.

Under section 213(a) of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (Pub. L. 104-121), we want to assist small entities in understanding this proposed rule. If the proposed rule would affect your small business, organization, or governmental jurisdiction and you have questions concerning its provisions or options for compliance, please call or email the person listed in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section. The Coast Guard will not retaliate against small entities that question or complain about this proposed rule or any policy or action of the Coast Guard.

C. Collection of Information

This proposed rule would not call for a new collection of information under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501–3520).

D. Federalism and Indian Tribal Governments

A rule has implications for federalism under Executive Order 13132 (Federalism), if it has a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the National Government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government. We have analyzed this proposed rule under that Order and have determined that it is consistent with the fundamental federalism principles and preemption requirements described in Executive Order 13132.

Also, this proposed rule does not have tribal implications under Executive Order 13175 (Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments) because it would not have a substantial direct effect on one or more Indian tribes, on the relationship between the Federal Government and Indian tribes, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities between the Federal Government and Indian tribes. If you believe this proposed rule has implications for federalism or Indian tribes, please call or email the person listed in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section.

E. Unfunded Mandates Reform Act

The Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1531–1538) requires Federal agencies to assess the effects of their discretionary regulatory actions. In particular, the Act addresses actions that may result in the expenditure by a State, local, or tribal government, in the aggregate, or by the private sector of \$100,000,000 (adjusted for inflation) or more in any one year. Though this proposed rule would not result in such an expenditure, we do discuss the potential effects of this proposed rule elsewhere in this preamble.

F. Environment

We have analyzed this proposed rule under Department of Homeland Security Directive 023-01, Rev. 1, associated implementing instructions, and Environmental Planning COMDTINST 5090.1 (series), which guide the Coast Guard in complying with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321–4370f), and have made

a preliminary determination that this action is one of a category of actions that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment. This proposed rule involves a safety zone lasting two hours that prohibits entry into portions of Gallants Channel in Beaufort, NC. Normally such actions are categorically excluded from further review under paragraph L60(a) of Appendix A, Table 1 of DHS Instruction Manual 023–01–001–01, Rev. 1. A preliminary Record of Environmental Consideration supporting this determination is available in the docket. For instructions on locating the docket, see the **ADDRESSES** section of this preamble. We seek any comments or information that may lead to the discovery of a significant environmental impact from this proposed rule.

G. Protest Activities

The Coast Guard respects the First Amendment rights of protesters. Protesters are asked to call or email the person listed in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section to coordinate protest activities so that your message can be received without jeopardizing the safety or security of people, places, or vessels.

V. Public Participation and Request for Comments

We view public participation as essential to effective rulemaking and will consider all comments and material received during the comment period. Your comment can help shape the outcome of this rulemaking. If you submit a comment, please include the docket number for this rulemaking, indicate the specific section of this document to which each comment applies, and provide a reason for each suggestion or recommendation.

Submitting comments. We encourage you to submit comments through the Federal Decision-Making Portal at <https://www.regulations.gov>. To do so, go to <https://www.regulations.gov>, type USCG- 2023-0050 in the search box and click "Search." Next, look for this document in the **Search Results** column, and click on it.

Then click on the **Comment** option. If you cannot submit your material by using <https://www.regulations.gov>, call or email the person in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section of this proposed rule for alternate instructions.

Viewing material in docket. To view documents mentioned in this proposed rule as being available in the docket, find the docket as described in the previous paragraph, and then select “Supporting & Related Material” in the Document Type column. Public comments will also be placed in our online docket and can be viewed by following instructions on the <https://www.regulations.gov> Frequently Asked Questions webpage. Also, if you click on the Dockets tab and then the proposed rule, you should see a “Subscribe” option for email alerts. The option will notify you when comments are posted, or a final rule is published.

We review all comments received, but we will only post comments that address the topic of the proposed rule. We may choose not to post off-topic, inappropriate, or duplicate comments that we receive.

Personal information. We accept anonymous comments. Comments we post to <https://www.regulations.gov> will include any personal information you have provided. For more about privacy and submissions to the docket in response to this document, see DHS’s eRulemaking System of Records notice (85 FR 14226, March 11, 2020).

List of Subjects in 33 CFR Part 165

Harbors, Marine safety, Navigation (water), Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Security measures, Waterways.

For the reasons discussed in the preamble, the Coast Guard is proposing to amend 33 CFR part 165 as follows:

PART 165--REGULATED NAVIGATION AREAS AND LIMITED ACCESS

AREAS

1. The authority citation for part 165 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 46 U.S.C. 70034, 70051, 70124; 33 CFR 1.05-1, 6.04-1, 6.04-6, and 160.5; Department of Homeland Security Delegation No. 00170.1, Revision No. 01.3.

2. Add § 165.529 to read as follows:

§ 165.529 Safety Zone: Gallants Channel, Beaufort, NC.

- (a) *Definitions.* For the purposes of this section-

Captain of the Port means the Commander, Coast Guard Sector North Carolina.

Participant means an individual or vessel involved with the Crystal Coast Triathlon.

Representative means any Coast Guard commissioned, warrant or petty officer who has been authorized to act on the behalf of the Captain of the Port.

- (b) *Location.* The following area is a safety zone: all navigable waters of Gallants Channel from the Route 70 Bridge in Beaufort, NC, at N 34° 43' 38", W 076° 40' 04" then North-West to Russel Slough Channel Day-Beacon 10 (LLNR34860) at N 34° 43' 58", W 076° 40' 27.5".

- (c) *Regulations.* (1) The general regulations governing safety zones in § 165.23 apply to the area described in paragraph (b) of this section.

- (2) With the exception of the participants, entry into or remaining in this safety zone is prohibited unless authorized by the COTP, Sector North Carolina or a designated representative.

- (3) No vessel may be present in the safety zone when it is subject to enforcement, and any vessel in violation of that prohibition must depart the zone immediately.

- (4) The COTP North Carolina can be reached through the Coast Guard Sector North Carolina Command Duty Officer, Wilmington, North Carolina, at telephone number 910-343-3882.

- (5) The Coast Guard can be contacted on VHF-FM marine band radio channel 13

(165.65 MHz) and channel 16 (156.8 MHz).

(d) *Enforcement.* The U.S. Coast Guard may be assisted in the patrol and enforcement of the safety zone by Federal, State, and local agencies.

(e) *Enforcement period.* This section will be enforced the second Saturday in May, from 8 through 10 a.m. The enforcement period may change, but a notice will be provided if there is a change in the enforcement period.

Dated: March 27, 2023.

Matthew J. Baer,
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard,
Captain of the Port, Sector North Carolina.

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